

MEMORANDUM REGARDING OSI

1. BACKGROUND

Scientific intelligence is a relatively new concept. Prior to 1939, there was no scientific intelligence collection and evaluation in the service of any country except Germany and there it was only a few years old. Before the war, scientific intelligence was collected on a piecemeal basis [REDACTED] 25X1C

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B. The US Experience

US scientific intelligence during World War II was also on a piecemeal basis. OSRD, OSS, and TIS all contributed but the main interest was technical intelligence. When the technical services evaporated after the war, the Joint Research and Development Board was set up and, developing a need for scientific intelligence, asked the then CIG to provide it. RDB appeared before the Dulles Committee when its survey was being made, before the Eberstadt Committee on Reorganization of the Executive Departments of Government, and before the Hawley Committee on medical support. All three of these committees recommended a strong scientific intelligence program and emphasized the paramount importance of having such programs centrally coordinated. To meet this need, OSI was established 31 December 1948 by CIA General Order 13, as recommended by NSC 50.

About this time or shortly thereafter, a series of studies were made on the scientific intelligence problem involved in different fields of science, including the Project Charles Report; the Wetter Report to the Secretary of Defense (December 1949), a strong indictment of lack of coordination in the scientific field and of collection failures in atomic, biological and chemical fields; the Project Hartwell Report; the Berkner Report, a secret supplement to the report to the Secretary of State on Science and Foreign Relations; and the report of the AEC Ad Hoc Committee of NSC in December 1950. All of these reports emphasized the lack of coordination of scientific and technical intelligence with the Government.

The need for a strong scientific intelligence organization was also clearly pointed up in Technical Paper No. 120 of the Mapping, Charting and Research Laboratory of the Ohio State University Research Foundation in November 1950 as follows:

"We must realize that Russian science is blossoming forth, even though the color and fragrance of its flowers is not altogether to our liking. We must also remember that Russia controls a better half of German science as well as science in the satellite countries, and is very well informed about the latest developments in American and European science. The status of science determines the status of technology and the status of technology determines the war potential of a nation."

It was in an effort to provide for central coordination, the need for which was so strongly set forth in the above reports, that OSI requested and obtained on 26 September 1951 in CIA Regulation 70 such a complete statement of mission and functions.

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